

COLWICH PARISH COUNCIL



PD021 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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Parish Centre, St. Mary's Road, Little Haywood, Staffordshire, ST18 0TX
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FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Financial Regulations – PD021

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Name	Position	Date
Michael Lennon	Clerk	

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FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Contents

1	General	4
2	Accounts and Audit	5
3	Budget and Precept	6
4	Procurement	7
5	Banking and Payments	9
6	Payments (Electronic, Cheque, Cards, Petty Cash)	10
7	Payment of Salaries	12
8	Loans and Investments.....	13
9	Income.....	14
10	Payments Under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works (Public Works Contracts)	14
11	Stores and Equipment	15
12	Assets, Properties and Estates	15
13	Insurance	15
14	Charities	16
15	Risk Management.....	16
16	Suspension and Revision of Financial Regulations.....	17
	Appendix 1	18

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1 GENERAL

- 1.1** These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by Colwich Parish Council (the Council) and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the Council's main governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for Councillors and officials. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders (PD006) and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2** Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice officials to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3** Wilful breach of these regulations by an official may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4** In these Financial Regulations:
- 1.4.1** 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - 1.4.2** "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - 1.4.3** "Authorise" refers to a decision by the Council, or a committee or an official, to allow something to happen.
 - 1.4.4** 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - 1.4.5** *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 1.4.6** 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the Council cannot change.
 - 1.4.7** 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the Council to its Councillors and officials.
- 1.5** The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the Council. The Chief Officer has been appointed as RFO for the Council and these regulations will apply accordingly.
- 1.6** The RFO:
- 1.6.1** Acts under the policy direction of the Council.
 - 1.6.2** Administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices.
 - 1.6.3** Determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems.
 - 1.6.4** Ensures the accounting control systems are observed.
 - 1.6.5** Ensures the accounting records of the Council are kept up to date.
 - 1.6.6** Seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of Council resources.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1.6.7 Produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.7 The Council must not delegate any decision regarding:

1.7.1 **Setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement).**

1.7.2 **The outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls.**

1.7.3 **Approving accounting statements.**

1.7.4 **Approving an annual governance statement.**

1.7.5 **Borrowing.**

1.7.6 **Declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.**

1.7.7 **Addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.**

1.8 In addition, the Council shall:

1.8.1 Determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts.

1.8.2 Authorise any grant or single commitment of more than £5,000.

2 ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

2.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.2 **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the Council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**

2.3.1 **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which they relate.**

2.3.2 **A record of the assets and liabilities of the Council.**

2.3 The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

2.4 The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the Council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them, with any related documents, to the Council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.5 **The Council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**

2.6 **Any official or Councillor of the Council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary.

2.7 The internal auditor shall be appointed by the Council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's risk management, control and

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

- 2.8 The Council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - 2.8.1 Is competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council.
 - 2.8.2 Reports to the Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year.
 - 2.8.3 Can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships.
 - 2.8.4 Has no involvement in the management or control of the Council.
- 2.9 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - 2.9.1 Perform any operational duties for the Council.
 - 2.9.2 Initiate or approve accounting transactions.
 - 2.9.3 Provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions.
 - 2.9.4 Direct the activities of any Council official, except to the extent that such officials have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.10 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 2.11 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.12 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all Councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

- 3.1 **Before setting a precept, the Council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 3.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the October Employment Committee, to inform the November Finance Committee, for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Chief Officer and the Chair of the Council and relevant committees. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 3.3** The RFO must by no later than the first week of November, prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year, along with a forecast for the following 3-years, to be considered by the Finance Committee in November and the Council in February, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 3.4** Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year and shall be added to the General Reserve. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward, by placing them in an earmarked reserve, with the formal approval of the Full Council.
- 3.5** Each committee shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the Finance committee not later than the end of October each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.6** The draft budget, with any committee proposals and three-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the November Finance Committee and a recommendation made to the February Full Council.
- 3.7** Having considered the proposed budget and three-year forecast, the Council shall determine its budget. The Council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the beginning of February for the ensuing financial year.
- 3.8** **Any Councillor with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 3.9** The RFO **shall issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each Councillor with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 3.10** The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 3.11** Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the Full Council, following a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

4 PROCUREMENT

- 4.1** **Councillors and officials are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any official procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 4.2** The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 4.3** Every contract shall comply with the Council's Standing Orders [PD006] and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 4.4** **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 4.5** Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the Council shall, with the exception of items listed in paragraph 4.7, obtain prices as follows:
- 4.5.1** For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000, including VAT, the Chief Officer shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 4.5.2** **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the Council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 4.5.3** For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Chief Officer/RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes.
- 4.5.4** Where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Chief Officer/RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 4.5.5** For smaller purchases, the Chief Officer and officials shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 4.6** **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 4.7** The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to the items below:
- 4.7.1** Specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes.
- 4.7.2** Repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment.
- 4.7.3** Works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract.
- 4.7.4** Goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 4.8** When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 4.9** The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 4.10** Expenditure on items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
- 4.10.1** The Council for all items over £5,000.
 - 4.10.2** A duly delegated committee of the Council for expenditure itemised in their annual budget and new items up to £5,000, providing there is sufficient approved budgetary provision.
 - 4.10.3** The Chief Officer, for items up to £5000, excluding VAT, providing there is sufficient budgetary provision.
- 4.11** Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Chief Officer, and, where necessary, by the appropriate Chairman.
- 4.12** No individual Councillor, or informal group of Councillors, may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.
- 4.13** No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the budget. During the budget year and with the approval of Full Council, having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved, virement, to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate.
- 4.14** In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises, the Chief Officer may authorise expenditure of up to £5,000, excluding VAT, on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Chief Officer shall report such action to the Chairman as soon as possible and to the Full Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.15** No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 4.16** An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared, or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 4.17** Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

5 BANKING AND PAYMENTS

- 5.1** The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The Council has resolved to bank with Unity Trust Bank and CCLA.
- 5.2** The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to Council. The Council shall review the schedule for compliance and,

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the Council. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised.

- 5.3** Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.4** The Council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Three people must be involved in any payment. An official of the Council shall create online payments or write a cheque which will require dual Councillor online authorisation or dual Councillor cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised, and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the Council's bank.
- 5.5** All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the Council before being certified by the Finance Officer (FO), working with the RFO. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the FO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified'.
- 5.6** All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the Council, unless the Council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 5.7** The Chief Officer shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
 - 5.7.1** Any payments of up to a maximum £5,000, excluding VAT, provided that any action taken complies with any legislative provisions, especially, but not limited to, cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises.
 - 5.7.2** Any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the Council, where the RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Council.
 - 5.7.3** Fund transfers within the Council's banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Council.
 - 5.7.4** Vire funds between different cost codes and cost centres, as required, and to report any virements to the Finance Committee and Full Council.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

6 PAYMENTS (ELECTRONIC, CHEQUE, CARDS, PETTY CASH)

- 6.1** Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the Council shall identify a number of Councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. Neither the Chief Officer nor any other official may be an authorised signatory.
- 6.2** All authorised signatories shall have access to view the Council's bank accounts online.
- 6.3** No official or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the Council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the Council.
- 6.4** The finance officers shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two authorised signatories.
- 6.5** Two Councillors, who are authorised signatories, shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 6.6** Evidence shall be retained showing which Councillors approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 6.7** A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next Full Council meeting and appended to the minutes.
- 6.8** With the approval of the Council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection), may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised Councillors. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 6.9** Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the Council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained, and any payments are reported to the Full Council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.
- 6.10** If thought appropriate by the Council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two authorised signatories, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to the Council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the Council at least every two years.
- 6.11** Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by two of the Chief Officer/RFO and the FO and an authorised

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

signatory. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

- 6.12** Councillors and officials shall ensure that any computer used for the Council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 6.13** Remembered password facilities, other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification, should not be used on any computer used for Council banking.
- 6.14** Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two authorised signatories.
- 6.15** A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 6.16** To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a Council or committee meeting. Any signatures obtained away from Council meetings shall be reported to the Council at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.17** Any corporate multipay card or trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to Officials, including the Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer, Head groundsman and Senior Lengthsman and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 6.18** Personal credit or debit cards of Councillors or Officials shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.19** The Council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1** **As an employer, the Council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 7.2** **Councillor allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 7.3** Salary pay bands shall be agreed by the Council, upon a recommendation from the Employment Committee. No changes shall be made to any official's pay band, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 7.4** Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 7.5** Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.6** Each payment to officials of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Employment Committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 7.7** Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Full Council.
- 7.8** Before employing interim officials, the Council must consider a full business case.

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1** Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the Full Council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 8.2** Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the Full Council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 8.3** The Council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy (PD023) in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices, and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 8.4** All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.5** All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.6** Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

9 Income

- 9.1** The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2** The Council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Chief Officer. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the Council.
- 9.3** Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The Council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 9.4** All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be deposited intact with the Council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 9.5** Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.6** The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the Council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted by the due date.
- 9.7** Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.8** Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the Council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any Council meeting.

10 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 10.1** Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 10.2** Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Chief Officer to the contractor in writing, with the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

11 STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 11.1** The Chief Officer, working with the Deputy Chief Officer and/or Head Lengthsman shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 11.2** Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 11.3** Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 11.4** The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

12 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 12.1** The Chief Officer shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council.
- 12.2** The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the Council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 12.3** The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 12.4** No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).
- 12.5** No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to Council with a full business case.

13 INSURANCE

- 13.1** The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the Council's review of risk management.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 13.2 The Chief Officer shall give prompt notification to the FO (Deputy Chief Officer) of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 13.3 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Council at the next available meeting. The finance officers shall negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers, in consultation with the Chief Officer.
- 13.4 All appropriate Councillors and officials shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the Council.

14 CHARITIES

- 14.1 Where the Council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Chief Officer and FO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Chief Officer and FO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

15 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 15.1 **The Council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 15.2 The Chief Officer shall prepare, for approval by the Council, a risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 15.3 When considering any new activity, the Chief Officer shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.
- 15.4 **At least once a year, the Council must review the effectiveness of its systems of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 15.5 **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
 - 15.5.1 **Ensure that risk is appropriately managed.**
 - 15.5.2 **Ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions.**
 - 15.5.3 **Prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud.**
 - 15.5.4 **Allow the reconstitution of any lost records.**
 - 15.5.5 **Identify the duties of officials dealing with transactions.**
 - 15.5.6 **Ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 15.6 At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a Councillor other than the Chair, or any cheque signatory, shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO. The Councillor shall sign and

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

date the reconciliations and the original bank statements, or similar document, as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Finance Committee.

- 15.7** Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any Council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The Council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any Council computer is not lost if an official leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

16 SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 16.1** The Council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of Chief Officer or RFO. The Chief Officer shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the Council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 16.2** The Council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all Councillors. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the Council to act unlawfully.
- 16.3** The Council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

SIGNED	<i>W Plant</i>
COUNCILLOR WENDY PLANT, PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN	

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

APPENDIX 1 - TENDER PROCESS

- A1.1 Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Chief Officer shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- A1.2 The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Chief Officer in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the Council.
- A1.3 Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Chief Officer in the presence of at least one Councillor of the Council.
- A1.4 Where an electronic tendering process is used, the Council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- A1.5 Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 30 (PD006) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- A1.6 Where the Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.